

# Quarterly Performance Reports

Number of Overdue FOIA Requests

2.2.1 Reform Plan Priority Area (FY21-22): Speeding Up FOIA Responses  
FY2018 through FY2021



National FOIA Office  
EPA Office of General Counsel

EPA-2022-001623

## **Data Gap**

**SM 2.2.1:** Eliminate backlog and meet statutory deadlines for responding to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests

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### **Description of data gap**

Target development; some results available for supporting measures. As of May 31, 2018:

- FOIA Requests received in FY 2018: 7,897
- FOIA Requests closed w/in Statutory Deadline in CY 2018: 1,493 (29%)
- Backlog beginning FY 2018: 1,528
- Current backlog: 2,539 (60% increase)

### **Root Cause**

This is a new performance measure.

### **Actions to be taken by Sept. 30 to gather data**

- Working to establish baseline to set targets.

# Speeding Up FOIA Responses

Executive Sponsor: Matt Leopold   Process Owner: Neil Bigioni   Project Lead: Wendy Schumacher, Joan Moumbleaux

## Goal

By September 30, 2022, eliminate the backlog and meet statutory deadlines for responding to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

Current Backlog: 2,539

## Actions in 2018

February: FOIA Lean Kaizen event

April: Completed reorganization of OEI National FOIA Program and OGC FOIA Expert Assistance Team into the OGC National FOIA Office (NFO)

May: Established Intake Centralization Team and FOIA Process Flow Team

## Actions Planned through Sept. 30

- Publish draft FOIA regulations in Federal Register
- Hold Kaizen events for new FOIA teams
- Hire additional staff for NFO FOIA operations work
- Develop process to capture data for new measure #41 or propose alternate method to measure monthly progress on backlog

## Challenges

- Regulations must be revised to allow for meaningful centralization of intake process.
- Integrating OGC's FEAT and OEI's National FOIA program, along with any newly hired staff, into a fully functional team, and providing for permanent NFO management.
- Tracking new measures or changes to current measures through FOIAonline or other tools

Metric	YTD		Feb.	March	April	May
Overdue FOIA Requests (cumulative)	Target	-	-	-	-	-
	Actual	2,539	2,325	2,331	2,419	2,539
New FOIA requests not responded to in a timely manner	Target					
	Actual					EPA-2022-001623

# Missed Target & Reform Area: Speeding Up FOIA Response

Executive Sponsor: Elise Packard Process Owner: Timothy Epp Project Lead: Larry Gottesman/Denise Walker Metric Owner: Timothy Epp

**PG 2.2.1:** Eliminate backlog and meet statutory deadlines for responding to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests

**Project Goal:** By September 30, 2022, eliminate the backlog and meet statutory deadlines for responding to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests

## Results:

Performance Metric Title	Custom Field	JOP	Target Direction		YTD	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept
Eliminate backlog and meet statutory deadlines for responding to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests		1/31/2018	Decrease	Target	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		2325		Actual	2616	-	-	-	2325	2331	2419	2537	2539	2597	2553	2942	2616

## Root Cause

Significant increase in FOIA requests; complicated lines of authority and inadequate accountability in a decentralized program.

## Progress Made in FY18

- Re-organized National FOIA Office and announced Regional Office reorganization to improve accountability and begin centralization
- Began hiring for expanded staff (NFO and AO)
- Developed performance appraisal standard to be included in manager agreements

## Actions Planned through End of 1st Quarter FY19

- Conclude hiring and on-boarding in NFO
- Complete transition of site specific FOIA requests to publicly available MyProperty information
- Complete evaluation of options and publish FOIA regulations proposal in Federal Register

**Challenges:** FOIAonline 3.0 (incomplete migration of data and released records); managing data quality; training staff in FOIA processing

# Missed Target & Reform Area: Speeding Up FOIA Response

Executive Sponsor: Elise Packard Process Owner: Timothy Epp Project Lead: Larry Gottesman/Denise Walker Metric Owner: Timothy Epp

**Goal/PG 2.2.1** Eliminate the backlog and meet statutory deadlines for responding to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests

## Results

Metric ID	Performance Metric Title	Custom Field	JOP	Target Direction		FY 2018 EOY	YTD	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
PG 2.2.1	Eliminate backlog and meet statutory deadlines for responding to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests		1/31/2018	Decrease	Target	-	2325	2484	2431	2378	2325	2272
			2325		Actual	2616	3106	2503	2721	2664	3106	

## Root Cause

- Significant increase in FOIA requests
- Complicated lines of authority and inadequate accountability in a decentralized program.

## Progress Made in FY18

- Re-organized National FOIA Office and announced Regional Office reorganization
- Began hiring for expanded staff (NFO and AO)
- Developed performance appraisal standard to be included in manager agreements

## Actions Planned through End of 1st Quarter FY19

- Publish Phase 1 update to FOIA regulations in Federal Register and begin Phase 2 options analysis
- Complete development and begin delivery of agency-wide supervisor training
- Improve centralized FOIA intake and assignment process

**Challenges** Managing data quality; training staff in FOIA processing; reviewing voluminous document collections

# Missed Target & Reform Area: Speeding Up FOIA Response

Executive Sponsor: Elise Packard Process Owner: Timothy Epp Project Lead: Larry Gottesman/Denise Walker

**PG 2.2.1** Eliminate backlog and meet statutory deadlines for responding to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

## Root Cause

Significant increase in FOIA requests; complicated lines of authority and inadequate accountability in a decentralized program

## Progress Made Towards Goal

- Re-organized National FOIA Office
- Completed hiring for expanded staff (NFO and AO)
- Began issuing monthly backlog reports for HQ and Regional Offices
- Completed FOIA Flow Board training kit
- Complete regional FOIA office realignment into Regional Counsel Offices

## Challenges

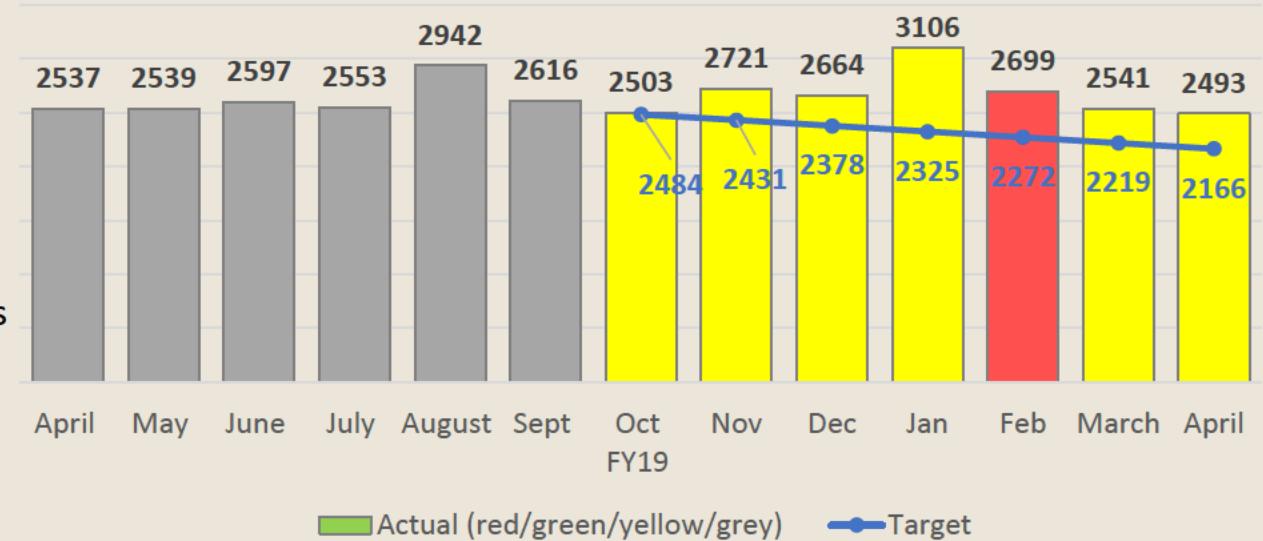
- Managing data quality; Training staff in FOIA processing

## Actions Planned through End of 3rd Quarter FY19

- Publish Phase 1 update to FOIA regulations in Federal Register
- Begin Phase 2 options analysis
- Complete development and begin delivery of agency-wide supervisor training
- Analyze data collected from pilot offices and refine National Pulse Board
- Improve centralized HQ FOIA intake and assignment process

## Number of FOIA Requests in Backlog

Preferred Direction: *Decrease*



# Missed Target & Reform Area: Speeding Up FOIA Response

Executive Sponsor: Elise Packard Process Owner: Timothy Epp Project Lead: Larry Gottesman/Denise Walker

**PG 2.2.1** Eliminate backlog and meet statutory deadlines for responding to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

## Root Cause

Significant increase in FOIA requests; complicated lines of authority and inadequate accountability in a decentralized program

## Progress Made Towards Goal

- Re-organized National FOIA Office & Regional FOIA Offices
- Began issuing monthly backlog reports for HQ and Regional Offices
- Rolled out FOIA Flow Boards & began collecting National Pulse Board data
- Published FOIA regulation update & centralized FOIA intake
- Completed development and begin delivery of supervisor training

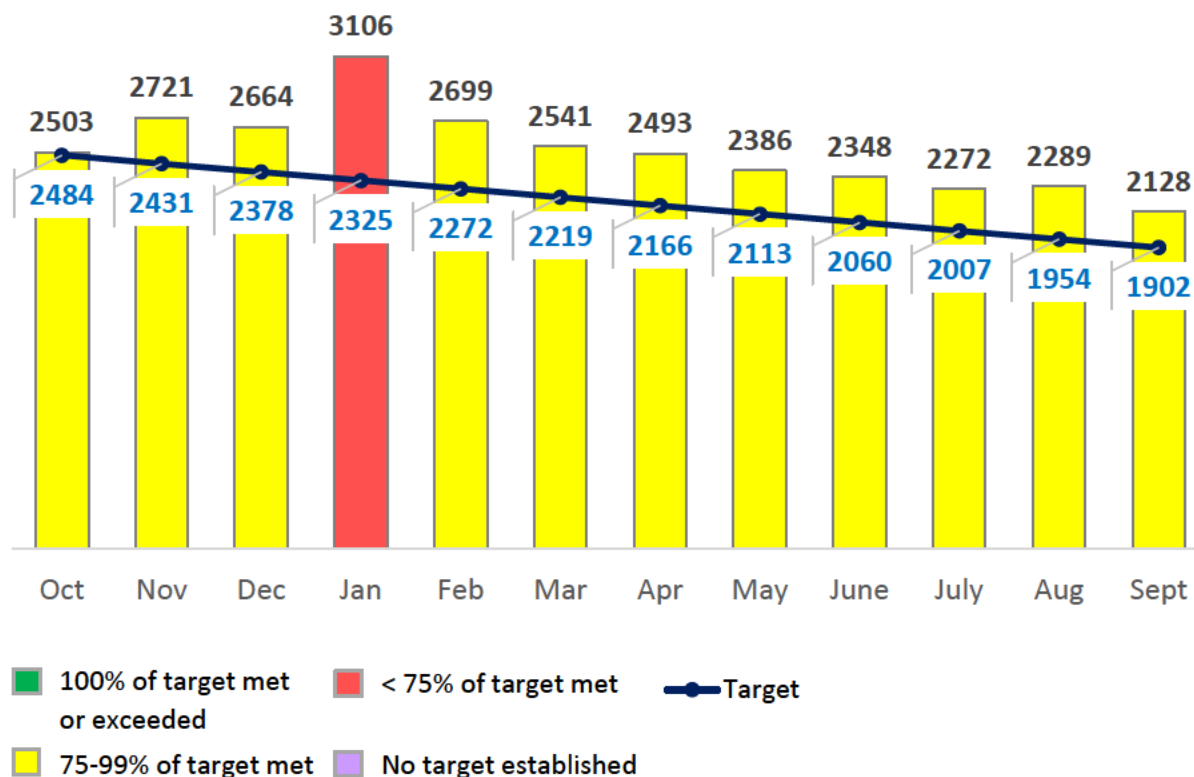
## Actions Planned through End of 1st Quarter FY 2020

- Analyze data collected from pilot offices and refine National Pulse Board
- Improve centralized HQ FOIA intake and assignment process
- Add cascading FOIA bowling chart targets for all HQ and Regional Offices
- Develop agency-wide supervisor training plan for FY 2020

## Challenges

- Managing data quality; Training staff in FOIA processing

Number of FOIA Requests in Backlog  
In FY 2019

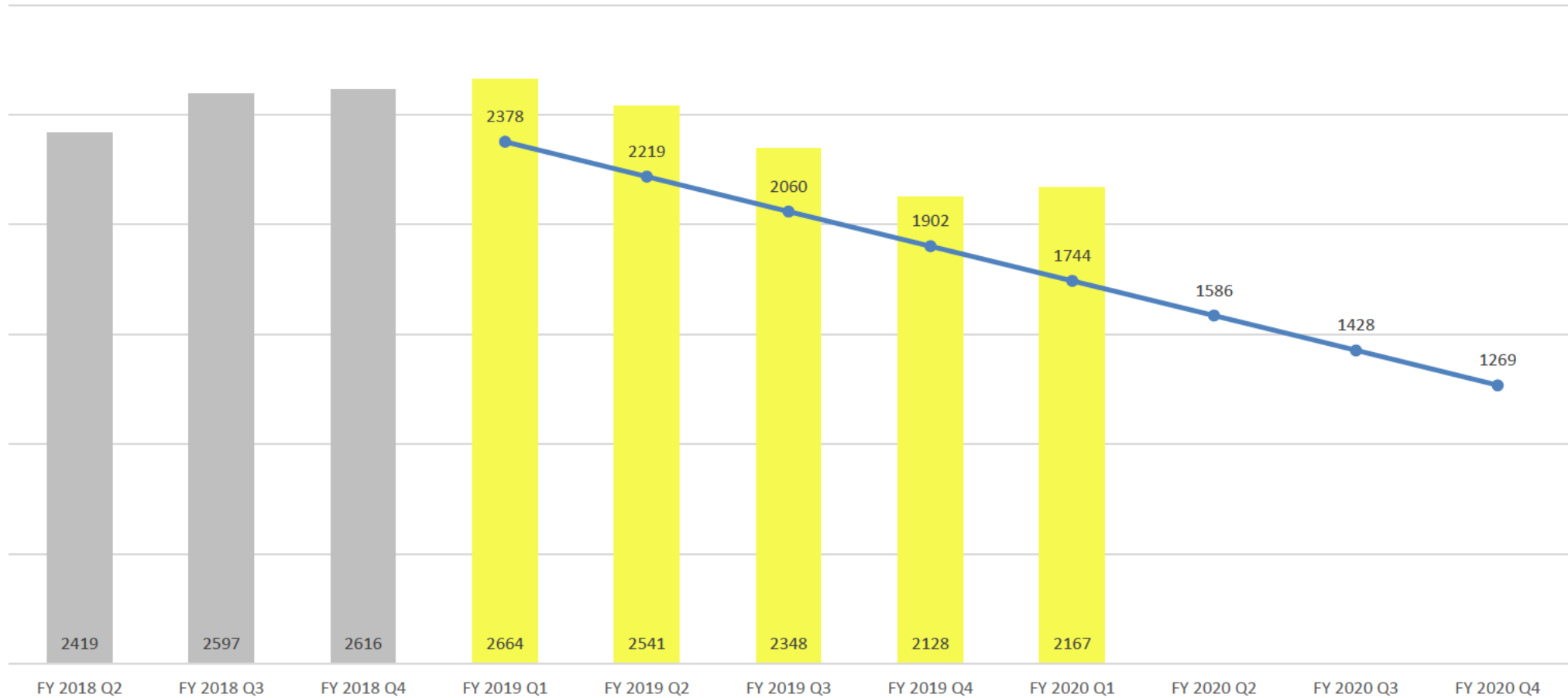


## Number of Overdue FOIA Requests

2.2.1

Reform Plan Priority Area (FY19-22): Speeding up FOIA Responses

Preferred Direction: *Lower Than Target*



100% of target met or exceeded < 75% of target met 75-99% of target met No target established

Target

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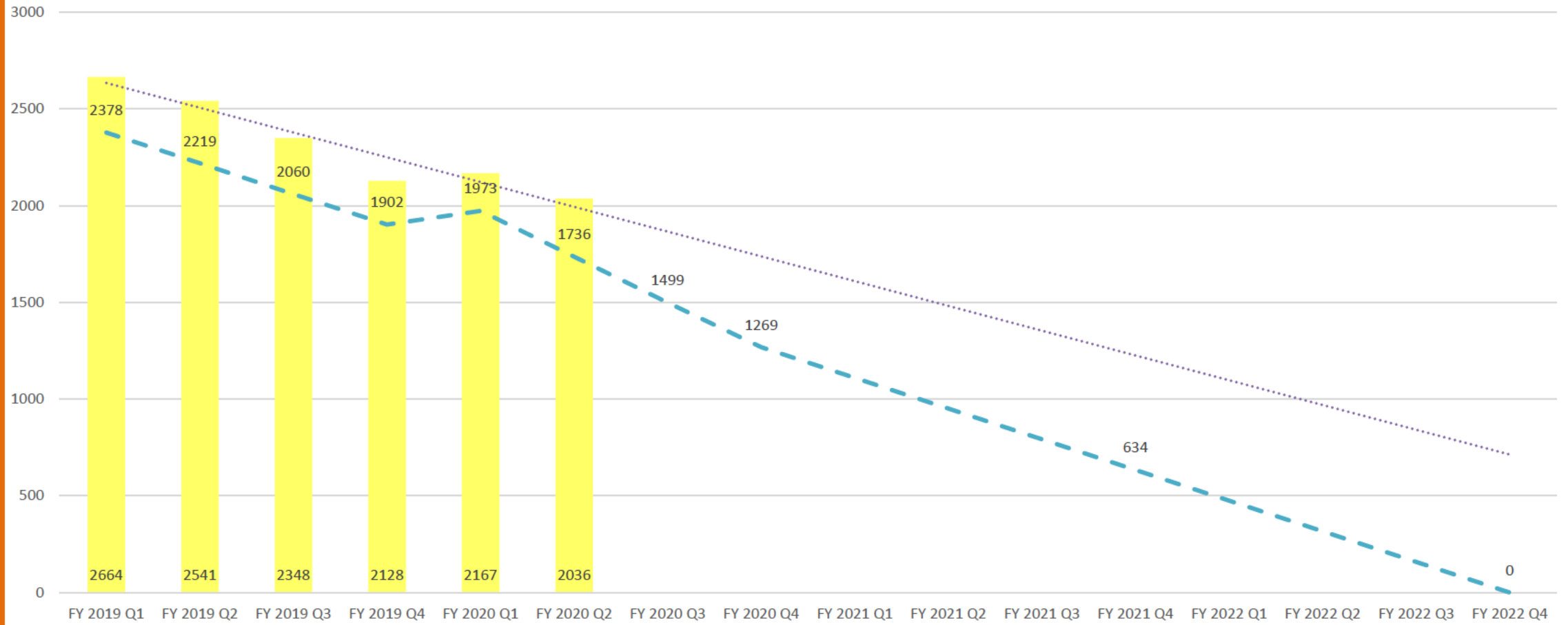


## Number of Overdue FOIA Requests

2.2.1

Reform Plan Priority Area (FY1-22): Speeding Up FOIA Responses

Preferred Direction: Lower Than Target

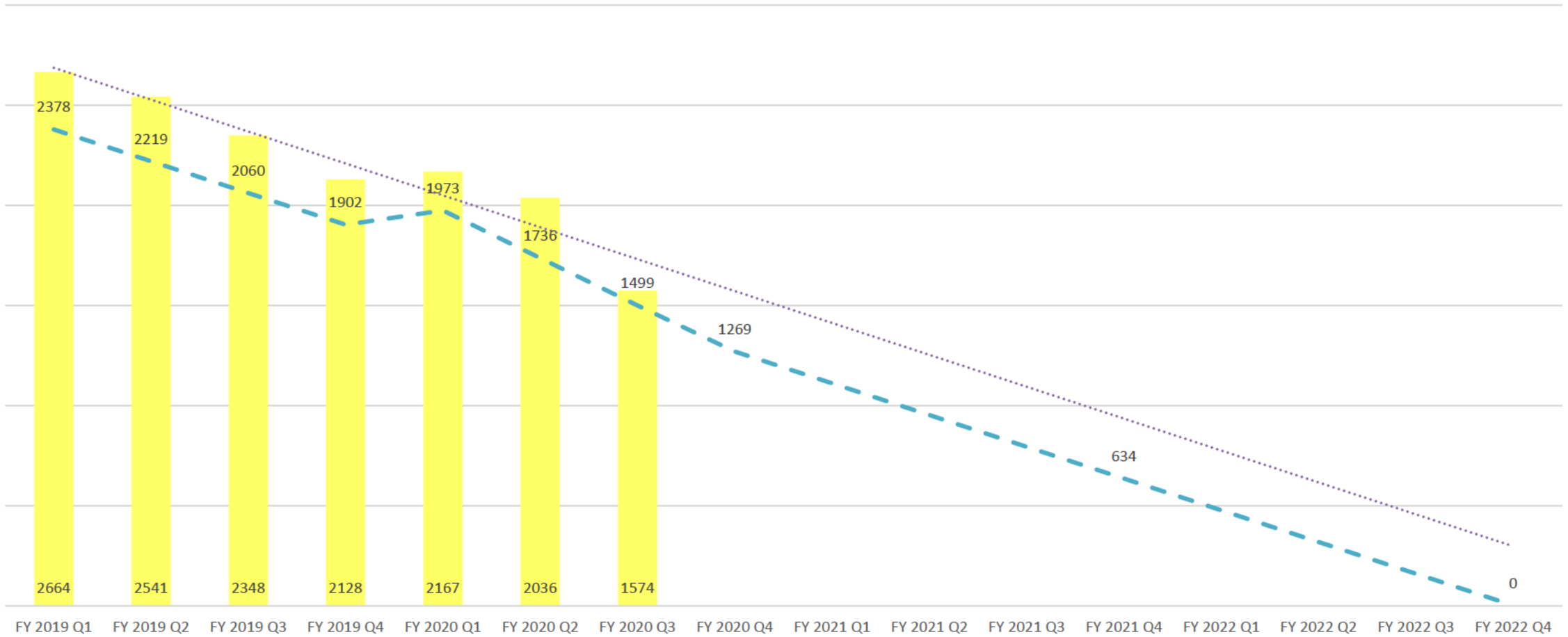


## Number of Overdue FOIA Requests

2.2.1

Reform Plan Priority Area (FY1-22): Speeding Up FOIA Responses

Preferred Direction: *Lower Than Target*

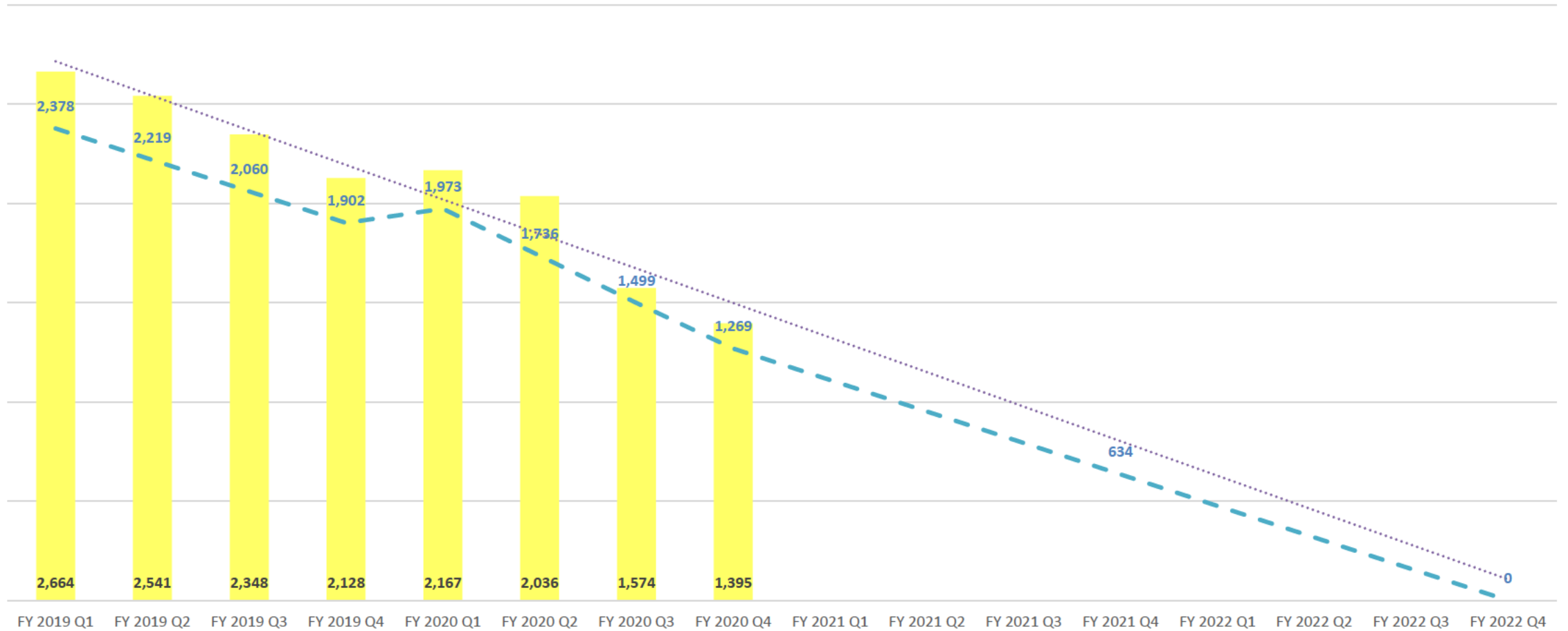


## Number of Overdue FOIA Requests

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Reform Plan Priority Area (FY19-22): Speeding Up FOIA Responses

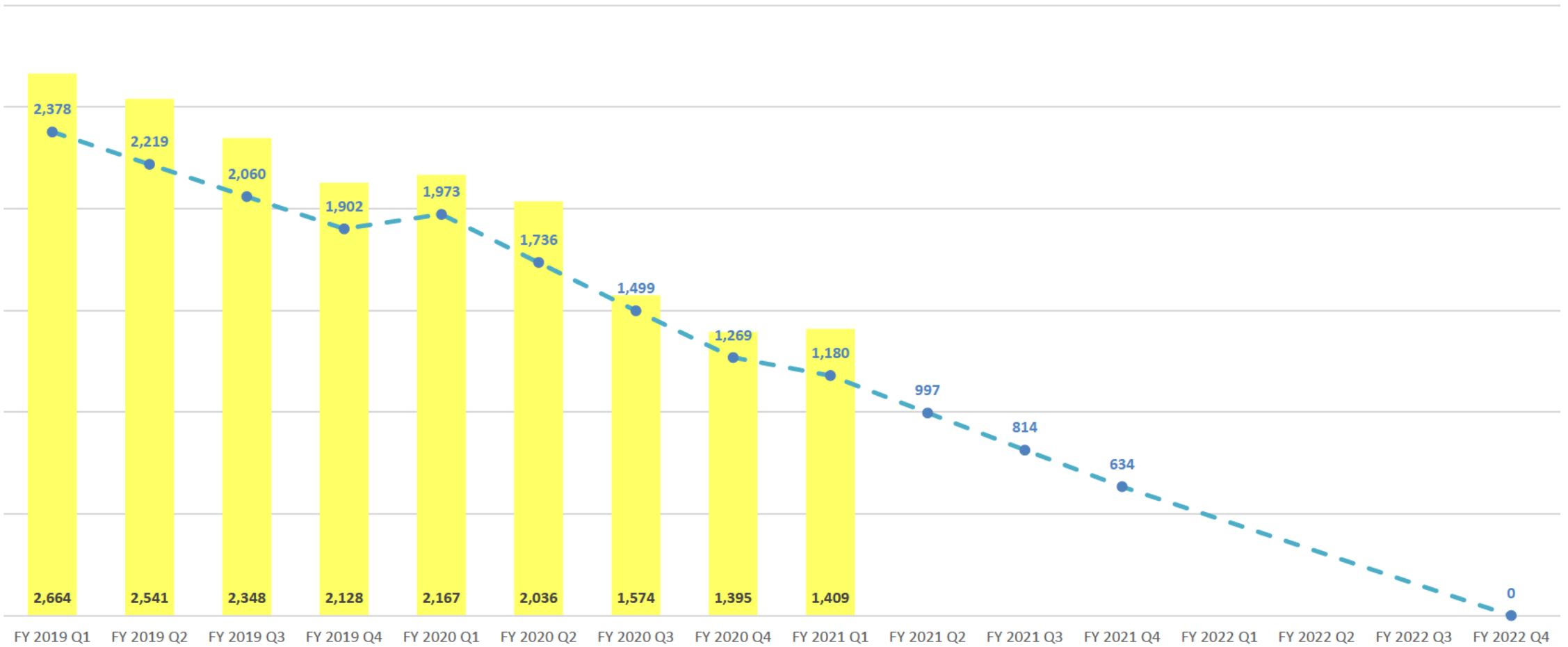
Preferred Direction: *Lower Than Target* ↓ +



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2.2.1

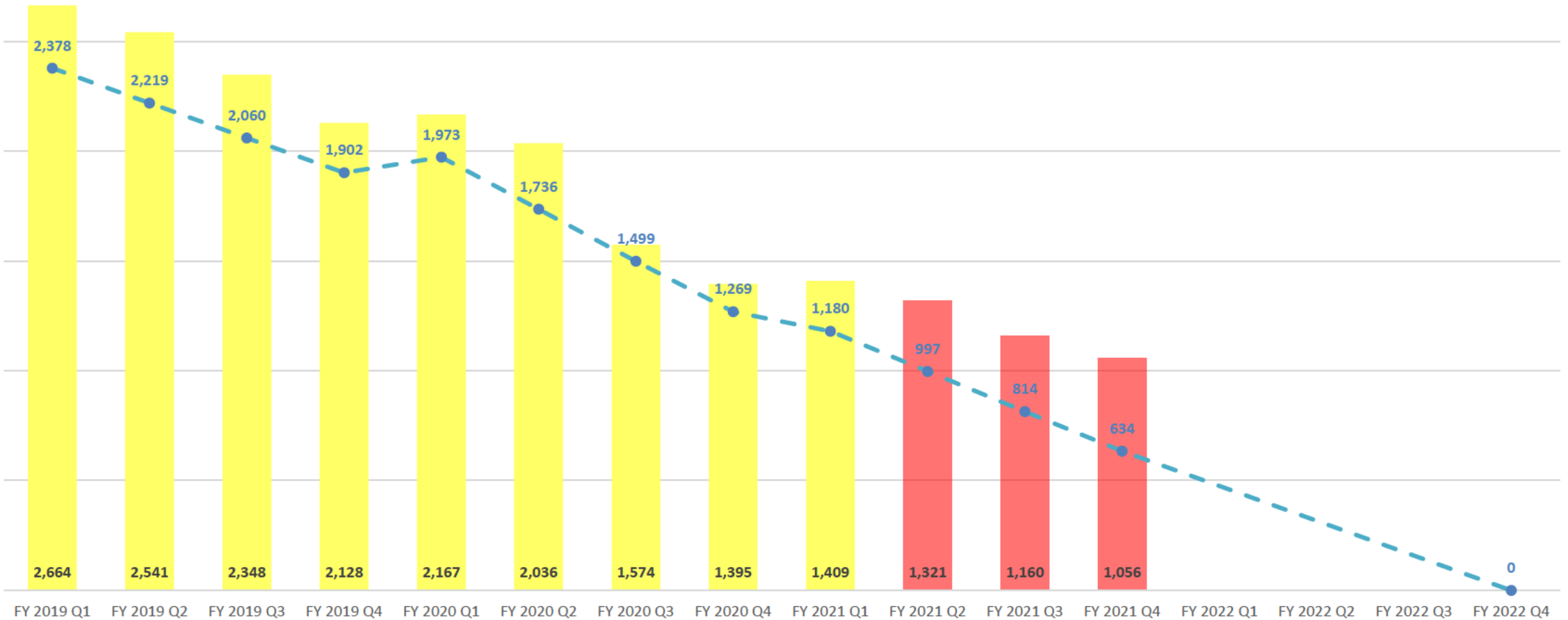
Preferred Direction: *Lower Than Target*



## Number of Overdue FOIA Requests

2.2.1

Preferred Direction: *Lower Than Target*



This LTPG will continue in EPA's FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan with some changes in methodology

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